



Commander Mark Vislay

Commanding Officer, Coast Guard Air Station Sitka



Commander Mark Vislay graduated from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in 1994 earning a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics and Computer Science. His first tour of duty was as Deck Watch Officer aboard Coast Guard Cutter BOUTWELL, home ported in Alameda, California. He then attended Naval Flight Training in Pensacola, Florida and earned his wings in 1998. He was assigned to Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater, Florida to fly the HH-60J “Jayhawk”, conducting Search and Rescue (SAR), migrant interdiction, and counter narcotics missions.

In 2002, Commander Vislay was assigned to Air Station Sitka, Alaska where he continued to serve as a duty standing SAR pilot and conduct numerous law enforcement and aids to navigation missions. He next received orders as an HH-60J Flight Examiner at the Coast Guard’s Aviation Training Center, Mobile Alabama in 2005. During this time, he taught and evaluated flight students and conducted HH-60J unit standardization evaluations. As Pilot-in-Command of an HH-60J, he was also one of the first Coast Guard assets to arrive in New Orleans following the devastating wake of Hurricane Katrina. Over the course of nine days, Commander Vislay and his crew flew in excess of 44 day and night hours to save 167 lives. In addition to his flying duties, he earned

a Master of Science degree in Performance Technology from the University of South Alabama and served as the Training Center’s Chief, Performance Technology Branch making significant improvements to Coast Guard aviation training systems and curriculum.

From 2009 to 2011, he served as Chief, Operations Training Branch, Coast Guard Force Readiness Command, Alameda, California in which he oversaw the Coast Guard’s \$20 million dollar operational training budget responsible for 269 training courses and seven enlisted rating schools. Commander Vislay returned to Alaska in the summer of 2011 as the Operations Officer for Coast Guard Air Station Kodiak where he directed operations of five HC-130H, six MH-60T, and four MH-65D aircraft that responded to all CG missions in PACAREA’s largest operating theatre. He was instrumental in providing the Coast Guard’s first-ever sustained aviation presence in the Arctic by standing up Forward Operating Location Barrow, Alaska. In addition, his efforts to integrate television camera crews during challenging Alaska flight operations in support of the hit television program, “CG Alaska”, earned him co-recipient honors of the 2013 CG Academy Alumni Achievement award.

Commander Vislay’s personal military decorations include the Distinguished Flying Cross, Coast Guard Meritorious Service Medal, two Coast Guard Commendation Medals, and three Coast Guard Achievement Medals.